

**Opening Statement of Jonathan S. Adelstein**  
**Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**  
**July 16, 2002**

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, it has been an honor to work with you and your staff over the years. After fifteen years in the Senate, it is humbling to appear before you as a nominee to serve on one of Congress's most important creations: the Federal Communications Commission.

I thank Senator Daschle and Senator Johnson for their generous introduction. I am deeply grateful to Senator Daschle for the wisdom he has shared with me over the years, and for his display of confidence in recommending me for this position.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Chairman Hollings, for scheduling this hearing so promptly.

I am grateful to President Bush for nominating me, and Governor Bill Janklow of South Dakota for his stalwart support.

Finally, to my fellow members of the Senate staff. Without the work we have done together, and the help of my friends, colleagues and mentors, I could not be prepared to pursue this opportunity.

I want you all to know that I come from an extraordinary family of which I am very proud.

Stepping back, my great-grandmother homesteaded near the Badlands of South Dakota. Her son, my grandfather, became an engineer and built bridges for the Allies in France during World War I. After our victory, he returned to start a construction company that grew to become one of the largest employers in the state. My father took over that business and made it thrive before moving on to his own career in public service.

The motto of our family company carries with me today: "Builders of Better Bridges and Highways." Mr. Chairman, if confirmed to the FCC, I want to make that motto my own. Just as roads and bridges provide physical links, advanced communications and information services bring people together. They can actually conquer physical distances, as well as challenge the less tangible barriers that separate us. They have the potential to weave together the fabric of our society. They make the best educational and commercial opportunities available to all Americans, regardless of income or geography. This is the promise of modern communications.

My own family's presence on the Great Plains has endured for four generations. I feel honored by that heritage, and duty-bound to ensure the benefits of advanced communications reach all Americans -- including those who sustain our nation's rural areas -- a commitment enshrined in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

America, of course, is not just a place, but a unique set of ideas and aspirations. Broadband represents the most powerful means we have yet invented to communicate the best that America has always offered the world: the promise of freedom and equality. Greater bandwidth and more competition will foster more freedom and more opportunity -- better bridges and highways between people.

To best promote those ideals -- and to help combat the enemies of freedom -- America must retain its leadership in communications. Congress has established a legislative framework designed to ensure our network remains the most advanced, most accessible and most reliable in the world. But the continued vitality of the communications sector, and our economy as a whole, face serious challenges.

If confirmed, I commit myself to working with this committee, with Congress, with the Chairman and members of the Commission, and with all stakeholders to implement a sensible, bipartisan approach to maintaining America's leadership. Guided by the policies Congress set forth in its communications laws, if confirmed I will work to enhance competition, promote universal access and efficiently manage the public spectrum. In light of September 11<sup>th</sup>, I will also make it my highest priority to address all the communications-related needs of national security and public safety.

My family, my education and my fifteen years of service to this institution have, I believe, prepared me for that task.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your consideration. I welcome any questions members of the Committee may have.